

THE CHaBAD WEEKLY

Vol4, Num.5

In this week's Torah portion, Chayei Sarah, we read of Sarah's passing, Abraham's purchase of the Cave of the Machpela in Hebron for her burial place, and Abraham's dispatching of his trusted servant Eliezer to find a wife for Isaac. All of these events took place when Abraham was at a well-advanced age. In fact, the Torah tells us, "And Abraham was old (zakein), well endowed with days." The Midrash comments: "Some people are old but not endowed with days; others are endowed with days but not old. In this instance we find a person possessing both qualities."

What does this tell us about our forefather Abraham's greatness? A zakein, an elderly person, is defined as one who has acquired wisdom. By studying Torah he has learned a great deal. The zakein has achieved a high level of perfection of his soul. "Endowed with days," however, refers to a person whose every day is perfect and whole. Not only does he perform the mitzvot properly, but he does so every single day of his life. Through his actions, the days themselves are elevated. He illuminates his environment by the commandments he observes and he raises his surroundings to a higher state of perfection.

The terms "old" and "endowed with days" refer to two types of people, and indeed, to two types of tzadikim. Some righteous people are concerned only with themselves and their own pursuit of excellence. By toiling greatly in the study of Torah they attain the level of zakein, but the people around them and the world at large are ignored. Time and effort are devoted solely to their own concerns. Other tzadikim turn outward to disseminate their light upon their surroundings, devoting themselves to each and every person with whom they come in contact. These righteous people forget about themselves entirely, selflessly ignoring personal considerations for the sake of others. Abraham, however, simultaneously embodied both of these qualities. "And Abraham was old, well endowed with days." While managing to achieve the highest level of personal perfection, Abraham sought to perfect his surroundings as well, thereby illuminating the entire world with holiness. (From: L'Chaim 5758 #494, Adapted by Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, Volume 3)

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And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah (23:2) Where did he come from? He came from Mount Moriah, Sarah having died of grief over the Binding of Isaac. (Midrash Rabbah)

And Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver (23:16) Said Rabbi Judan the son of Rabbi Simon: This is one of the three places regarding which the nations of the world cannot accuse Israel and say, "You have stolen them." The three places are: the Cave of Machpeilah, the site of the Holy Temple, and the tomb of Joseph at Shechem. The cave of Machpeilah, as it is written: "And Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver"; The Temple: "So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold" (I Chronicles 21:25). And Joseph's tomb: "And [Jacob] bought the parcel of land (at Shechem) for a hundred pieces of silver (Genesis 33:19). (Midrash Rabbah, Genesis 33:19)

Four hundred shekels of silver (23:16) As per Leviticus 27:16, a field the size of a beit-kur represents a value of 50 silver shekels. A beit-kur contains 30 beit-se'ah and a beit-se'ah is an area 50 cubits by 50 cubits, or 2,500 square cubits; a square cubit (approx. 20 inches by 20 inches) is the space occupied by a single person. Thus, the size of the field which Abraham purchased for 400 silver shekels was eight kur, or 600,000 square cubits (2,500 x 30 x 8)--the area required to hold the 600,000 souls of Israel. (The Vilna Gaon)

Our sages tell us that the Torah contains 600,000 letters (counting the spaces between letters), for each Jew possesses something of the Torah. The same is true of the Land of Israel. Israel is the eternal inheritance of the Jewish people, equally the property of every individual Jew. And so it has been from the very first moment of Jewish ownership of the Holy Land: the first plot of land obtained by the first Jew included a share for every Jewish soul. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe) chabadonline.com

I am a stranger and a resident amongst you (23:4)

The Jew is a "resident" in the world, for the Torah instructs him not to escape the physical reality but to inhabit it and elevate it. Virtually all the mitzvot (divine commandments) of the Torah are physical actions involving physical objects, in keeping with the Jew's mission to make a "dwelling for G-d in the material realm" by sanctifying the everyday materials of everyday life.

At the same time, the Jew feels himself a "stranger" in the material world. His true home is a higher, loftier place—the world of spirit, the world of holiness and G-dliness from which his soul has been exiled and to which it yearns to return. Indeed, it is only because the Jew feels himself a stranger in the world that he can avoid being wholly consumed and overwhelmed by it, and maintain the spiritual vision and integrity required to elevate it and sanctify it as an abode for the divine presence. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

The story is told of the visitor who, stopping by the home of the great Chassidic master Rabbi DovBer of Mezheritch, was outraged by the poverty he encountered there. Rabbi DovBer's home was bare of all furnishing, save for an assortment of rough wooden planks and blocks that served as benches for his students during the day and as beds for his family at night. "How can you live like this?" demanded the visitor. "I myself am far from wealthy, but at least in my home you will find, thank G-d, the basic necessities: some chairs, a table, beds..." "Indeed?" said Rabbi DovBer. "But I don't see any of your furnishings. How do you manage without them?"

"What do you mean? Do you think that I schlep all my possessions along with me wherever I go? When I travel, I make do with what's available. But at home—a person's home is a different matter altogether!"

"Ah, yes," said Rabbi DovBer. "At home, it is a different matter altogether..." (Likutei Dibburim)- chabadonline.com

R. AIZIK HOMILER RELATED:
 "WHEN I CAME TO LYONNA I MET ELDER CHASSIDIM WHO HAD BEEN CHASSIDIM OF THE MAGGID AND OF R. MENACHEM MENDEL OF HORODOK. THEY USED TO SAY: "HAVE AFFECTION FOR A FELLOW-JEW AND G-D WILL HAVE AFFECTION FOR YOU; DO A KINDNESS FOR A FELLOW-JEW AND G-D WILL DO A KINDNESS FOR YOU; BEFRIEND A FELLOW-JEW AND G-D WILL BEFRIEND YOU. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM, CHESHVAN 27).

*Do you want to know what it's all about? There are two paths to finding out: You could take time off from life to sit and wonder. Once you have come to your conclusions, there may still be some lifetime left to implement your decisions.
 Or you could start by doing the things you already know to be good- teach them to others, inspire those younger than you, change the world. And don't be surprised if along the way you discover what it's all about.*

-Bringing Heaven Down to Earth

PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES

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| Sunday | 8:00 AM | Gemara-Tractate Berachos (men) |
| Monday | 8:00 PM | Chumash (men and women) |
| Tuesday | 8:00 PM | Gemara-Tractate Sukka (men) |
| Wednesday | 8:30 PM | Halacha and Tanya (women) |
| Thursday | 10:00 AM | Chassidus (women) |
| | 8:00 PM | Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students |
| Daily | 6:45 to 7:15 AM | Chasidus |
| | Between Mincha and Maariv | Halacha |

SHABBAT PARSHAT CHAYEI SARA
Shabbos Mevorchim
 November 24, 2000

Candlelighting: 4:27 PM
Friday Mincha: 4:40 PM

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LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:07 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- Tehillim 8:00 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen
- Chumash 3:50 PM
- Mincha 4:20 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 5:27 PM

Anyone who would like to sponsor a Kiddush or Seuda Shlishit can contact Rabbi Shusterman at (310) 271-9063

Kiddush this week is being sponsored by Dovid Sochaczewski in memory of his father's yartzheit.

Yartzheits: Dov Sochaczewski - Cheshvan 29, Milton Spiegel - Kislev 1./+--+

Happy Birthday to Barton Tanenbaum, Rivka Illulian,



There will be no classes Sunday through Tuesday, Nov. 26 -28.

DAILY MINYONIM

Shacharit: Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM
 Sunday: 9:00 AM

Tuesday, Kislev 1 is celebrated by Chassidim as the day marking the Rebbe's OBM recovery to good health in 5738 (1977).



GOOD

SHABBOS!

